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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY

Bulgaria

SUBJECT

Cost of Living, Wages, Housing, Hospitals

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1. The show windows are filled with good quality goods from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the USSR. Bulgarian goods are of poor quality, but the prices of both domestic and foreign goods are high considering the poverty among workers and officials. Thus, nobody can buy these goods. An imported meter of wool cloth costs 350 to 650 leva. One meter of domestic wool costs 250 to 450 leva. The price of a finished man's suit varies from 250 leva, for a suit made out of rags and small pieces of material, up to 300 leva for better suits. One kg of oranges costs 28 leva, ordinary bread 1.50 leva per kg, wheat bread 2.10 leva per kg, Dobrudzha bread three leva per kg, white bread 3.80 leva per kg, condensed milk 3.40 to four leva per liter, one kg of meat 12.50 to 16 leva, one kg of cheese 13 leva, oleo (sunflower oil) one kg 12 leva, one kg of lard 14 to 19 leva, one kg of sugar 10 to 13 leva (sugar cannot be obtained), eggs .55 to .72 leva per egg.

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2. According to [redacted], this year's [1954] harvest is very poor, especially for bread grains. Recently ordinary bread was being sold on the black market for four leva per kg. Bread was recently bought from the black market for four leva per kg by starving peasants. Up to one month ago eight thousand kg of bread were sold in Vidin, but now 16 thousand kg of bread are sold. This bread is bought by peasants who are the producers of the bread. This means that the state delivery quotas are so high that the producing peasants must purchase grain in order to fulfill their state delivery quotas. These peasants have to buy bread on the black market in the cities. In Sofia, usually on a Friday, which is market day, one can see lines of peasants in front of bakeries of the Gratskatogovia (urban store), with the queue starting at 5:00 o'clock in the morning.

3. The average pay of white collar workers is 450 to 500 leva. The average pay of peasants in cooperative labor farms is from 100 to 130 leva [per day ?]. In addition they receive pay in kind such as grain, lard, corn, sunflower seeds, which are not even sufficient for a third of a year. The revenues of these cooperative labor farms go out as state deliveries as well as into the pockets of [redacted]

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the high Party administrative personnel in the cooperative farms.

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4. [redacted] that his pay [redacted] was not sufficient to support his family for the entire year. When he did above-norm production, he received 600 leva. A physician stated that he received at most 720 leva per month for above-norm work. This amount was just sufficient to maintain his parents. With that amount he could not buy them clothes, shoes, etc and he could barely avoid their starvation. [redacted] who was without work recently, depended on his son for support. His son [redacted] [redacted] Housing Committee

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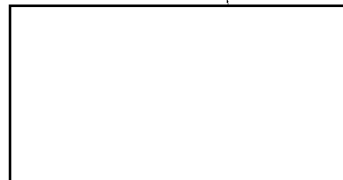
25X1 with pay of 620 leva. The son's wife is a bookkeeper in a bank with pay of 390 leva per month. With this amount of money they were able to live, but were hungry and were always in fear of losing even that which they had.

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5. The poor financial situation of the population is the main reason for so many divorces. The State Security takes advantage of these family risks and uses both the wife and husband as collaborators. These collaborators inform on the life and activity of other citizens who live in the same cooperative or housing area. It is interesting to note that divorced couples still live together in the same room because of a housing shortage in the cities, especially Sofia. In some cases, Bulgarians are not allowed to own apartments and rooms. Therefore, they do not take care of them and everybody lives from day to day. There are apartments in Sofia with two rooms where three and more families live. In an apartment with one room and one kitchen two families must live and this is the reason for the decline in morals, resulting in many divorces, of which there have been many in 1954. There are special housing courts (commissions) which examine hundreds of acts for disputed rooms, apartments, etc. and at the end they decide on who should stay in the room. The one who usually stays in an apartment or room is a Communist or one who bribes the Housing Commissions. Housing is being constructed in industrial centers such as Rudozem, Mardan, Sig, Kurdzhali, Dimitrovgrad, Dimitrovo, etc. However, it is given to notable Communists, Soviet specialists, to shop workers, to administrative personnel and militia in these cities.
6. Because there is a shortage of drugs, medical instruments, and because of the poor pay of the physicians and medical personnel, diseases in Bulgaria are widespread, especially among the workers. In Sofia, there has been much infantile paralysis. The Party does not take any steps to improve the health of the population. It built hospitals where there are industrial centers such as Dimitrovgrad, Rudozem, Kurdzhali, Dimitrovo, and others. But the care in these hospitals is not good and is only given superficially to calm the people. The government is only interested in the production of coal ores, uranium ore, bread grains, canned fruit, vegetables, tobacco, all of which goes to the USSR.

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